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TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Fact Sheet
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What is the Teacher of the Year Program?

The Maryland Teacher of the Year Program is an affiliate of the National Teacher of the Year Program and both recognize and honor exemplary elementary, middle, and high school teachers that are excellent instructors and education leaders in their schools and communities. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) oversees this program with all 24 local school systems participating. Annually, each local school system selects its top candidate for Maryland Teacher of the Year and submits the teacher's comprehensive packet to the MSDE which selects finalists and then the Maryland Teacher of the Year. The State winner is entered in the competition for National Teacher of the Year, an esteemed position. The National Teacher spends the year in speaking engagements nationally and internationally.

What are the selection criteria?

Teachers fill out an application describing their professional interests, community involvement, and philosophy of teaching. They also answer questions about education issues and trends and the teaching profession. Local selection criteria vary. Contact local school systems for that information.

What is the selection process?

Teachers must first be selected as state candidates by their local school systems and should contact their specific central office for applications. Twenty-four school systems submit their local Teacher of the Year candidate to MSDE. Written applications are judged and finalists are interviewed at the state level by a panel of education and community leaders. The panel consists of representatives of education, community, and corporate organizations.

How can a teacher be recommended for this award?

School systems are always searching for recommendations for this and other teacher awards. Contact your local public school system and ask to speak to its Teacher of the Year Coordinator. You can also contact the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Partnerships at 410-767-0370.

What Maryland Teacher of the Year celebrations and events take place?

Maryland's 24 Teachers of the Year are celebrated in many ways by their local school systems. They are honored by the Maryland Board of Education at a State Board Meeting and Honors Luncheon. The Maryland Teacher of the Year and all of the local Teachers of the Year are honored by the Maryland General Assembly and by the Baltimore Orioles. They also enjoy a cruise to St. Michael's sponsored by McDonalds.

An Oscar's style event, the Maryland Teacher of the Year Gala, is held in the fall of each year.

What do Teachers of the Year receive?

Teachers of the Year win tremendous respect as outstanding teachers. Each local Teacher of the Year receives a monetary award from MSDE as well as numerous gifts and prizes. The Maryland Teacher of the Year also receives a new car as a gift (not a lease) from the Maryland Automobile Dealers' Association. In addition, the Maryland winner receives a cash award, a Smart Board, and numerous other prizes. Winners are featured in video and television productions as well as in newspapers across the State.

The Maryland Teacher of the Year travels the state, speaking at numerous conferences, dinners, and other events. The teacher participates in National Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama, and is invited to U.S. Department of Education programs including an opportunity to meet the President of the United States. Teachers of the Year also participate in an annual national meeting in Dallas, Texas, sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers.

The Maryland Teacher of the Year attends important state functions in Annapolis and acts as advisor to the Maryland State Department of Education. While Maryland Teachers of the Year continue to teach during their appointed year, often they are given *partner teachers*, enabling them to participate in speaking engagements throughout the state. The National Teacher of the Year leaves the classroom for one full year to serve as a national education spokesperson.

Who are the sponsors and partners?

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